

(Received 05/08/2010 via email)

Attached (DraftInterimPlan_Updates_Rev1.pdf) is an update to comments mailed yesterday. Please use it instead of prior email.

In summary, here are the recommended changes/rationale. The attached also has these added to the Interim Plan Outline.

1. The goal to “Build facilities to improve the existing water conveyance system and expand statewide storage” seems short-sighted and appears to focus on expanded pumping out of the Delta to provide needed water to other areas of the state. Instead, the first step of the plan should be to determine the amount of flow required to maintain a healthy Delta ecosystem. Once that is determined, the rest of the plan can be finalized. If there are still issues/impacts to fish due to reverse flows when the exports are optimum, then projects like 2 Gates and others could be considered if still needed. Many scientists believe exports need to return to levels prior to 2007. This would reduce salt intrusion and would not cause the strong reverse flows affecting the salmon and smelt today. After the amount of water available from the Delta is determined, the components of a comprehensive state water plan can be determined. This plan needs to identify and include other steps such as the Tulare Lake Basin project, reducing evaporation from the Aqueduct, desalination plants, agriculture conservation, and groundwater clean-up.
2. Recognition of the “unique cultural, recreational, and agricultural values of the California Delta as an evolving place” is an important part of this plan. Recognition of the Delta as a home to millions and an economic basis for the communities (local agriculture, fishing, boating, home values, local businesses) needs to also be specifically considered and supported by this plan.
3. “Support for agriculture” should include maintaining farmers’ priority water rights.
4. “Support for agriculture” needs to be qualified.
 - a. There are currently lands with high levels of selenium being farmed. This has resulted in wildlife deformities and causes significant issues for downstream Delta farmers.
 - b. Some crops consume more water than others. The plan needs to support balancing the economic value of agriculture with negative impacts to the state water supply
 - c. Some farmers leverage their water rates to resell at a profit. This should be eliminated by mandating no profiteering from reselling water rights.

Programs to encourage farmers to switch to crops needing less water, eliminate farming on selenium-filled land and eliminate reselling water rights should be added to this plan.
5. There is a conflict in V(a) and V(b) since (a) is a study to determine if there is any scientific basis to assure Gates will be effective in protecting Delta Smelt and hence V(b) needs to be qualified based on the results of that study. Furthermore, the numerous objections raised by citizens to the 2-Gates project

including the safety of the gates (recreational and commercial boater safety and issues from blocking marine and fire safety vessels) are substantial concerns. The 2 Gates project as it was originally scoped in the USBR FONSI should not be included in this plan.

Thank You.

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